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ABSTRACT

Described is the system of evaluation used to monitor and assess the effectiveness of community service/continuing education programs in Florida funded through Title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965. It is necessary to first describe the State Agency's understanding of program evaluation and indicate the influences that contribute to that understanding. Part I indicates those influences and deals with the State Agency's understanding of the concept of program evaluation from the standpoint of definition, purpose, nature, and process. Part II describes project evaluation as it existed prior to the development of the present system, and then describes the present system as it appears in the State Agency Operation's Manual. (Author)

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PROGRAM EVALUATION

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FOR TITLE 1, HEA PROJECTS

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PROGRAM EVALUATION OF HEA TITLE I PROJECTS IN FLORIDA

John Scott Dailey

State University System
of Florida
Board of Regents

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76-5

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to describe the system of evaluation currently being used to monitor, and assess the effectiveness of, community service/continuing education programs in Florida funded through Title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965. In so doing it is necessary to first describe the State Agency's understanding of program evaluation, and indicate the influences that contributed to that understanding.

Part I of this paper indicates those influences, and deals with the State Agency's understanding of the concept of program evaluation from the standpoint of definition, purpose, nature, and process.

Part II describes project evaluation as it existed prior to the development of the present system; and then describes the present system as it appears in the State Agency Operations Manual.

Part I

The Concept of Program Evaluation

What is Program Evaluation?

Following are four quotations that are descriptive of evaluation.

"The Process of evaluation is essentially the process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are actually being realized by the program of curriculum and instruction." (Tyler: 1949, p. 105)

"Evaluation is the determination of the results attained by some activity designed to accomplish some valued goal or objective." (Suchman: 1967, p. 32)

"Evaluation....answers the question; How effective and efficient has the program been in achieving the desired objectives for the student group?" (Kemp: 1971, p.96)

"Evaluation is.....he determination of the extent to which an educational objective has been accomplished." (Houle: 1972, p. 231)

The conclusion reached after reviewing these brief references is that evaluation is a process that describes achievement, or lack of achievement, relative to stated objectives. This conclusion, although true, is too limited and one-dimensional to define program evaluation.

Patrick Boyle and Irwin Jahns (1970, p. 70) describe program evaluation as:

"The determination of the extent to which the desired objectives have been attained or the amount of movement that has been made in the desired direction."

Then they go on to explain:

"After the educator has determined the extent to which program objectives have been accomplished, it is quite reasonable to ask: Why were these results attained? How can we attain better results next time?"

Suchman, in reference to program evaluation, maintains that:

"Particular attention should be paid to the analysis of process - how and why various aspects of the program failed or succeeded."

Cyril Houle indicates that program evaluation answers these simple questions:

"Was...progress as good as expected? If not, why not? If so, why? (1972, p.5.)

The conclusion gained here is that program evaluation not only answers the question, "How well have we (or you) done? but also answers the question, "How did we (or you) do this well? Program evaluation is not only a process of measuring results (ends) it is also a process of assessing the procedures (means) that led to the results. Furthermore, it is explicit that program evaluation is made relative to clear, well-stated, and assessable program objectives.

Process: How Is It Accomplished?

Houle says that program evaluation "includes the two closely related processes of measurement and appraisal." (1972, p. 231)

Measurement is a determination by objective means of the extent to which objectives have been achieved.

Appraisal is a determination by subjective means of the extent to which objectives have been achieved.

Houle states that:

> "Appraisal may incorporate the data, provided by measurement, but it goes beyond them to sum them up, to reflect about their meaning, and to make a final culminating assessment of the value of the activity." (1972, p. 182)

Process: When Is It Accomplished?

Worthen and Sanders (1973) point out that program evaluation should be both formative and summative in nature.

Summative evaluation is the evaluation of the completed program, and can include an assessment of both end results and the means that contributed to the results. Summative evaluation questions: "How did we/you do?" and "How did we/you do it?" Answers to these questions serve to answer other questions and make decisions about future programs. Examples are: "Was the program worthwhile?" "Should it be done again?" and, if so, what changes might be necessary to improve outcomes.

Formative evaluation is on-going, beginning with the inception of the program and addresses the question: "How are we/you doing?" and "How are we doing it?" and leads to the question: "What changes are necessary to improve outcomes?"

Alkin and Fitz-Gibbon (1975) say that program evaluation should also be pre-formative in nature. Pre-formative evaluation deals with needs assessment and program planning, and addresses the questions: "What needs to be accomplished?" and "How do we go about accomplishing it?"

Purpose

The purpose of summative evaluation is the improvement of future programming. The purpose of formative evaluation is the improvement of the present program. Banathy indicates the importance of formative evaluation when he says:

> "The purpose of evaluation....is to ensure that the objectives of the system (program) are being met or, if not, that adjustments will be introduced in order to correct the system so that objectives can be eventually attained." (1968, p. 79)

Suchman stresses the importance of a formative system of evaluation that is built-in to the program (1967, p. 134) and maintains that such a system may serve the following valuable functions for program operation. (1967, 141)

1. Determine the extent to which program activities are achieving the desired objectives. Measure the degree of progress toward goals and indicate level of attainment.
2. Point out specific strong and weak points of program operation and suggest changes and modifications of procedures and objectives. Increase effectiveness by maximizing strengths and minimizing weaknesses.
3. Examine efficiency and adequacy of programs compared to other methods and total needs. Improve program procedures and increase scope.

4. Provide quality-controls. Set standards of performance and check on their continuous attainment.
5. Help to clarify program objectives by requiring operational definition in terms of measurable criteria. Challenge the "taken-for-granted" assumptions underlying programs. Point out inconsistencies in objectives or activities.
6. Develop new procedures and suggest new approaches and programs for future programs.
7. Provide checks on possible "boomerang" or negative side effects. Alert staff to possible changes of the program.
8. Establish priorities among programs in terms of best use of limited resources-funds, personnel, and time.
9. Indicate degree of transferability of program to other areas and populations. Suggest necessary modifications to fit changing times and places.
10. Advance scientific knowledge base of professional practice by testing effectiveness of proposed preventive and treatment programs. Suggest hypotheses for future research.
11. Advance administrative science by testing effectiveness of different organizational structures and modes of operation.
12. Provide public accountability. Justify program to public. Increase public support for successful programs and decrease demand for unnecessary or unsuccessful ones.
13. Build morale of staff by involving them in evaluation of their efforts. Provide goals and standards against which to measure progress and achievement.

14. Develop a critical attitude among staff and field personnel. Increase communication and information among program staff resulting in better coordination of services.

Alkin and Fitz-Gibbon say that pre-formative evaluation allows the evaluator to provide information on "the perceived importance of relevant goal areas, their current status, and the relative priorities of each." During the program planning, the evaluator can provide information about "competing educational programs that might be utilized for achieving the desired goals," as well as provide evaluative feedback on the planning document itself. (1975, p.3)

Summary of Part I

A review of the literature has resulted in the following conclusions regarding Program Evaluation.

Definition:

Program evaluation is an assessment of progress relative to stated objectives, as well as an identification of reasons why the program has, or has not, achieved those objectives.

Purpose:

The purpose of program evaluation is program improvement, as well as accountability.

Nature:

Program evaluation can be pre-formative, formative, or summative in nature. Summative evaluation is useful in planning future programs. Pre-formative evaluation is useful in improving the program plan. Formative evaluation is useful in improving the current program.

Process:

Program evaluation involves measuring and assessing results (ends) and the means responsible for those results.

It is the assumption of this paper that these conclusions are descriptive of effective program evaluation.

Part II

Evaluation of HEA Title I Projects

in Florida

Evaluation of Title I HEA Projects in Florida:
The Present State of Affairs

Federal regulations for Title I HEA stipulate that:

"The State Plan shall contain a statement of the policies and procedures to be followed by the State Agency in making periodic, systematic, and objective administrative reviews and evaluations in order to evaluate the status and progress of particular programs in terms of the annual program proposals and overall objectives stated in the plan." (Federal Register: Vol. 31, No. 68)

A review of the State Plan and the State Agency Operations Manual reveals that the State Agency has complied with the Federal Regulation by establishing the following methods of project evaluation.

1. Proposal Evaluation- performed by the screening, or review committee. (The State Advisory Council)
2. Progress Report- a questionnaire (developed by the State Agency) which is completed by each Project Director and submitted to the State Agency at a mid-point in the life of the project.
3. On-site visitation- performed by the State Agency at any point during the life of the project.
4. Final Report- a questionnaire (developed by the Federal Agency) which is completed by each Project Director and submitted to the State Agency upon the termination of the project.

It is important to note that these are only methods of evaluation, such as those described by Ray Bard (1971). The State Plan or the Operations Manual describes no [illegible] of project evaluation that explicitly:

Defines program evaluation,

States the purpose of program evaluation,

Describes the nature of program evaluation, and

Describes a process for program evaluation.

Such a system (The Desired State of Affairs) should be developed by the State Agency, written into the Operations Manual, and disseminated to all project directors and institutions involved in the Title I HEA Program in Florida.

A model for such a system follows:

CHAPTER 8. EVALUATION

8.1 Project Evaluation

8.1.1. Definition

Project evaluation is an assessment of progress relative to the project's stated objectives, and an identification of reasons why the project has, or has not, achieved those objectives.

8.1.2 Purpose

The primary purpose of project evaluation is project improvement. A secondary purpose is to insure the accumulation of data necessary to complete the annual report of the State Agency.

8.2.3 Nature

The nature of project evaluation is pre-formative, formative, and summative.

a. Pre-formative evaluation will allow the program planner to make whatever adjustments are necessary to improve the program plan.

b. Formative evaluations will allow the project staff to make whatever adjustments may be necessary for project improvement.

c. Summative evaluation will allow the State Agency to measure program effectiveness, and collect the data necessary for completion of the annual report of the State Agency.

8.1.4 Process

The process of project evaluation will involve measuring and

assessing project results relative to the stated objective , and the procedures and methodologies responsible for those results. The process of project evaluation will include The following methods:

a. A proposal review will be accomplished by the State Agency, in conjunction with the State Advisory Council. This review will insure that (1) the objectives of the intended project are clearly stated, assessable, and acceptable to the State Agency, (2) that the procedures and methodology described are clearly stated, relative to project objectives, and acceptable to the State Agency, and (3) a method of evaluation is described that will allow the project staff to assess the effectiveness of the learning experiences delivered by the project.

b. An interim report will be completed by the project director and submitted to the State Agency at a date specified by the State Agency. (Approximately mid-point in the life of the project). The format of the interim report will be developed by the State Agency, and will be constructed so as to allow the project director to describe progress toward stated objectives, and identify reasons why progress has, or has not, been achieved.

c. A site visit will be made by the State Agency no later than six weeks after receipt of the interim report. The site visit will allow the project

director and state agency to thoroughly review project achievement or non-achievement, discuss the reasons for achievement, or non-achievement, and develop adjustments that may be necessary for project improvement.

As a result of the site visit the State Agency will prepare a memorandum for the project director which reviews their conference and clearly states the adjustments that they both feel are necessary for project improvement. This memorandum will be sent to the project director no later than one week after the site visit. A copy of the memorandum will be sent to the president of the institution sponsoring the project.

d. A final report will be completed by the project director and submitted to the State Agency no later than two weeks after termination of the grant. The format for the final report is developed by the Federal Agency and allows the project director to make a final description of achievement relative to project objectives and identify reasons for achievement, or non-achievement.

The final report also provides the State Agency with the data and information necessary to complete the annual report of the State Agency.

System For Project Evaluation
Title I HEA

Proposal Review and Evaluation:
Pre-formative evaluation of:
a) Objectives (ends)
b) Procedures for attaining objectives (means)
c) Method of evaluating a and b

Interim Report: Formative evaluation
a) A statement of progress toward objectives (ends)
b) An assessment of program procedures (means)
c) A description of method of evaluating a and b

Site Visitation: Formative evaluation, to be:
a) Made within six weeks of interim report
b) An in-depth discussion of a, b, & c, of interim report
c) The basis of program adjustment, if necessary

Final Report: Summative Evaluation
a) Final statement of progress toward objectives (ends)
b) Final statement of program procedures (means)
c) Final description of method of evaluating a & b

Review of the Literature

The following references and authors influenced the development of this paper:

Two books, Evaluative Research: Principles and Practice in Public Service and Social Action Programs by Edward Suchman, and Educational Evaluation: Theory and Practice by Blaine Worthen and James Sanders, contributed to an improved understanding of the concept of evaluation.

Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction by Ralph Tyler, Instructional Design by Jerrold Kemp, and Instructional Systems by Bela Banathy were all useful in examining evaluation as a component of instructional design.

The Design of Education by Cyril Houle, and "Program Development and Evaluation" by Patrick Boyle and Irwin Jahns (Handbook of Adult Education, 1970) dealt with evaluation as a component of adult education programming.

Jack Rothman, in Planning and Organizing for Social Change, and Ronald Havelock, in The Change Agents Guide to Innovation in Education address the purpose of evaluation in community development programming.

Burton Friedman and Laird Dunbar, in Grants Management in Education: Federal Impact on State Agencies discuss evaluation of federal grant programs.

Program and Staff Evaluation by Ray Bard, The Modern Practice of Adult Education and Higher Adult Education in the United States by Malcolm Knowles, and Management By Objectives in Higher Education, edited by C. P. Heaton, were all useful in reviewing methods and procedures of program evaluation.

"Methods and Theories of Evaluating Programs," an article by Marvin Alkin and Carol Fitz-Gibbons, defines pre-formative evaluation, and describes its purpose in program planning.

Afterword

When this paper was written, the system of evaluation described was a proposed system, a desired state of affairs. This system is now a present state of affairs, and therefore the subject of state agency scrutiny and, yes, evaluation. Hopefully this scrutiny and evaluation will indicate yet another desired state of affairs in program evaluation toward which we may strive.

So far, (we are presently in the first year of implementation), the response from project directors, as well as deans and directors of community service and continuing education has been positive and enthusiastic. However, we can safely say that the state agency has benefited as much, or more, than those in the field. A systematic and ordered approach to program evaluation has given us new insights into the projects we administer. This has resulted in an improved understanding of their problems and a greater awareness of the many outstanding programs that are addressing community problems of Florida in a significant way.

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